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DEFENSE REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA AND U.S. POLICY

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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The October 1998 National Security Strategy states that our armed forces serve as a role model for emerging democracies around the world. We are attempting to shape the environment with the commitment of limited resources in order to strengthen new democracies. Shaping the environment in Latin America may prevent the U.S. from needing to respond in the future with a greater commitment of resources. Given the history of Latin American military involvement in politics, democracies cannot survive without military support. Reform of the defense establishments of these transition states is the primary way for the Department of Defense to encourage such support. This paper examines the effectiveness of this strategy within the U.S. Southern Command. It concludes that U.S. military engagement can contribute to democratically obedient armed forces in the region.

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THE STRATEGY OF DEFENSE REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA

The October 1998 National Security Strategy states that our armed forces serve as a role model for the world's emerging democracies. Our Department of Defense (DOD) objectives in Latin America are that all nations be peaceful and democratic and strongly committed to civilian control of the military and constructive civil-military relations.¹ This posture is consistent with the underlying premise that democracies do not wage war on one another and is likely to enhance stability in Latin America. It also enables the United States to commit limited military resources in a region that currently presents little threat to national security. Given the history of Latin American military involvement in politics, democracies cannot survive without military support. Strengthening and encouraging reform of the defense establishments of states undergoing the transition to democracy is the primary way for DOD to encourage that support. This paper examines the effectiveness of this strategy within the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) Theater. It seeks to answer whether military engagement efforts contribute to more democratically obedient armed forces.

CIVILIAN CONTROL DEFINED

First, we must state what a democratically obedient armed forces means and understand the difficulty in achieving it. The

United States defense establishment is complex and involves sectors that balance each other's power. The president as the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of Defense constitute the exclusively civilian National Command Authority (NCA). The operational chain of command runs from the NCA directly to regional Commanders in Chief (CINC). The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), who is the senior American military officer, is prohibited from exercising command authority. The military service chiefs are excluded from the operational chain of command. Huge civilian secretariats in DOD and in each of the services administer the military establishment. Congress, with the constitutional authority to declare war and to raise and equip armies and navies, provides the funding and maintains extensive and detailed oversight. A large cadre of civilian defense experts from universities and think tanks effectively analyzes and criticizes security strategy and policy. In fact, much of the higher level strategic thinking and writing in the United States since World War II has been done by civilians. This adds up to a complex interaction between civilians and the military and to effective civilian control.

But, the United States developed this tradition over a period of over 200 years. Civilian supremacy has always been maintained, but several military officers and ideas have challenged it. Winfield Scott ran for president in 1852 while

maintaining his position as Commanding General of the Army. General George McClellan ran against Lincoln during the Civil War in 1864. In the late nineteenth century, Emory Upton argued that the United States should become more like Germany in sacrificing democratic ideals for military preparedness.² As late as "when George Marshall was a junior officer of the Army, American military officers' thoughts on the civil-military relations of their country are saturated with Uptonian ideals that the United States can indeed never have an effective armed forces because of excessive interference in military affairs."³

Our own history indicates that establishing effective civilian control is a long and difficult task to accomplish. Only in the last fifty years has our complex civilian establishment grown up. The United States has also been unique since World War II as one of two and now the world's only superpower with external threats and worldwide responsibilities. In other words, we may serve as a model, but not as an exact replica for the emerging democracies. Given their current state of civil-military relations, Latin American nations will take many years to achieve effective civilian control. We must understand that any strategy toward that end must be long term.

As we examine our strategy to assist them in doing so, it is helpful to keep in mind the following three levels of civil-military relations.⁴ First is control or subordination, the

formal mechanisms used to assert civilian control. Almost every nation has these, but they may not always be observed. A nation must also go beyond these in order to gain real and lasting civilian control. Second is societal respect, the level of respect civilians have for the armed forces and their role in society. Civilian respect for the military makes control easier to achieve. Third is integration. If a society has achieved the first two, this, in turn, becomes easier to gain. It refers to the integration of the military and civilians at all levels of a nation's defense establishment. Most Latin American nations have not progressed beyond the first level. The question before us is, can they, and what can the United States do to assist.

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT STRATEGY

The 1980s saw Latin American military governments give way to civilian governments. Latin Americans have been accustomed to living under military governments and repeated military interventions in politics. It has been pointed out that about 50 percent of all Latin American changes in government between 1930 and 1965 occurred through nonconstitutional means. Most were military coups. In the 1980s, by contrast, less than 20 percent of government changes took place through nonconstitutional means. And two-thirds of those changes were victories by opposition parties.⁵ Clearly, the 1980s marked a

change for the prospects for democracy in the region. They marked the return of militaries to the barracks in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay where they had imposed long term rule on their countries, beginning as early as 1964. This trend continues in the 1990s. Currently, all but one country (Cuba) meets at least the forms of democracy and a military government runs none. In most countries they are, nonetheless, politically very influential.

As part of its theater strategy, USSOUTHCOM aims to reinforce this trend. In fact, it has long been involved with "shaping" military support for democratization. Our decade long support for El Salvador in its civil war took place in the Cold War context of preventing the spread of communism. But, we also realized that defeating guerrillas on the battlefield would not be sufficient. We encouraged military respect for democratization and human rights. The 1992 USSOUTHCOM strategy statement emphasized that the main objective of peacetime defense engagement in all forms "is the strengthening of democratic institutions in the fragile democracies of the region. If a program, exercise, or deployment does not meet this objective, then it needs to be reexamined, modified, postponed or canceled."⁶

Terms have changed since then, but objectives have remained the same. Current strategy uses the term "defense reform."

This involves sharing "with other states and their armed forces the principles, methods, and systems that undergird sound defense management and military professionalism."⁷ DOD and USSOUTHCOM have used several means to achieve this. Key to all is the role of the U.S. military in "demonstrating the subordination of militaries to civil authorities whenever possible."⁸ Primary means are formal educational institutions, regional defense conferences, and encouragement of Latin American military focus on external operations, such as international peacekeeping, rather than internal defense security.

DOD sponsored schools taught in Spanish (primarily the U.S. Army School of the Americas) have added courses on civil-military relations and human rights and strongly emphasize civilian control of the military. Resident attendance by Latin American officers at institutions such as the U.S. Army War College and other senior level institutions gives them an appreciation of the American values that make civilian control of the military possible. It also demonstrates that military professionalism can prosper under military subordination to civilian authority. Recognizing that civilian expertise on defense matters is lacking in the region, we have recently expanded these educational opportunities to civilians.

DOD sponsored staff talks and conferences include annual conferences of armed services chiefs and the annual Defense Ministerial of the Americas begun in 1995. In each, we discuss common security concerns and continue to promote the appropriate role for the military in a democratic society.⁹ At the first ministerial, held in Williamsburg, Virginia in July 1995, Latin American leaders asked the United States for assistance in improving civilian competence in defense related matters. The result was the establishment of the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS) in July 1997. The most recent ministerial was held in Bogota, Colombia in November 1998. The Defense Ministerial process has been positive, but a question remains concerning the extent of control that participating ministers have over their militaries.

Moving away from formal educational programs, mission orientation is an important variable. Encouraging Latin American participation in external operations refocuses its militaries away from internal security tasks, which have gotten them into partisan politics. United States strategy has been inconsistent on this issue. We encourage participation in peacekeeping operations, which gives Latin American militaries the external orientation we seek. Yet we need to be cautious that encouragement of military participation in internal counter-narcotics operations does not risk the opposite effect.

The professional military interaction and education has been done at little cost. Most of the funding comes from International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs. Grants are given to foreign governments to pay for the U.S. military training courses their students attend. It is a low cost, high benefit program. In fiscal years 1996-1998, the United States granted approximately \$27,000,000 to train 7100 Latin American students. Most of IMET involves traditional military training programs. Congress, however, mandated expanded IMET (E-IMET) in 1991 to focus exclusively on civil-military relations. In fiscal years 1996 and 1997, E-IMET represented about 21 percent of the total IMET program for Latin America, training 1468 students. Of these, 479 were civilians. Civilians who attend must have defense responsibilities in government ministries or legislatures or be involved in security affairs in the non-governmental sector. E-IMET provides responsible resource management skills, fosters greater respect for and understanding of the principle of civilian control of the military, and teaches systems of military justice, codes of conduct, and strategies for the protection of human rights.¹⁰

Each of these solidifies the positive trends in the relations between Latin American militaries and the civilians who must assert democratic control over them. The problem of asserting civilian control over the military has, in part, been

due to two interrelated phenomenon: a civilian willingness to let the military reign supreme in its own sphere and a lack of civilian expertise in defense matters.

An enormous social and psychological gap has always existed between the military and civilian society in Latin America. This becomes clear in the contrast between sources of military officers in the United States and Latin America. The majority of United States military officers graduate from civilian universities and receive their commissions through the Reserve Officer Training Corps. A minority comes from the military academies, such as West Point. In Latin America, there is virtually no other source of officers except their military academies. Most United States military officers return to civilian universities at some point to obtain graduate degrees. Their interaction with American civilian education begins early and continues throughout their careers. That is rare in Latin America. In fact, only recently, have a few of their military academies begun offering the required number of civilian courses needed to grant baccalaureate degrees.

This military educational gap is reinforced by the few opportunities for civilians to study national security affairs. The large cadre of civilian defense experts in the United States who can effectively criticize our defense policy and assume senior positions within DOD does not exist in Latin America.

This gap in military and civilian education is representative of the gap between military and civilian society as a whole.

To bridge this gap a dialogue between the two must be established. Each side has traditionally failed to understand and respect the other. Caesar Sereseres argues that the "military cannot close out a civilian presence within the armed forces. Instead, there needs to be more bridge-building. A civilian-military dialogue must be developed so that military officers can come to view themselves as the defenders, rather than the victims of democracy."¹¹

Thus, mutual mistrust and lack of civilian defense expertise account for civilian and military unwillingness to participate in this dialogue. Programs under the CHDS, mentioned earlier, have assisted in establishing the dialogue, although much remains to be done. Its specific purpose is to provide education to civilians involved in defense and to further understanding of the military's role in a democracy. Its mission statement states that it, "seeks to stimulate civilian and military thinking on defense policy and civil-military relations and to develop civilian expertise in defense and military matters." Further, it, "will provide a dynamic, civil-military forum to enhance mutual understanding and to learn about the complexities of defense decision making and resource management in a democratic society."¹²

E-IMET and other educational programs should be geared in this direction of giving military officers an understanding of the importance of civilian control of the military in a democratic society. We should continue the focus on giving civilians the expertise and understanding of defense matters needed to assert control over the military. Professor Luis Bitencourt Emilio of the Catholic University of Brasilia has stated that "societies educated on national security matters have a greater awareness of the roles of their armed forces, and of the potential deviations that may transform them into oppressors rather defenders of society."¹³

Latin America appears to be making progress toward this goal. We are currently seeing the rise of the first cadre of civilian defense experts in Latin America with doctorates in strategic studies and also "the increasing unification of control over the armed forces by the establishment of effective ministries of defense."¹⁴ Obstacles, however, remain.

Chile and Brazil may be taken as examples. Chile has a civilian defense minister and is attempting to create a defense community that is "a coalition of the civilian and military communities who share similar interests and a willingness to cooperate."¹⁵ But, the Minister of Defense, remarkably, has no vote on the National Security Council while the uniformed service chiefs do. It is difficult to imagine how control can

be established when the chief civilian has no vote on security policy while his ostensible subordinates do. Still, Chile recognizes the need for a civilian defense establishment. It has created a civil service within the defense ministry and has opened its senior military educational institutions to civilians. Presidential decrees mandate that each government department send a specified number of civilian employees to the National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies and to the service war colleges. The Chilean Army War College recently began offering a Master's degree in Defense Policy. Thus far, forty-one civilians and seventy-four military officers have received the degree. These programs were developed with the assistance of civilian institutions including the University of Chile and the Political Science Institute.¹⁶ President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil recently appointed the first Defense Minister in the nation's history. But Brazil is a long way from institutionalizing civilian control over the relatively autonomous military services. Thus, we see mixed progress. The creation of a civilian defense establishment has begun in most countries, but its head remains relatively powerless.

IMET and other programs have reinforced our aim of more democratically obedient armed forces in Latin America. But serious challenges remain in changing institutional cultures and developing effective mechanisms of civilian control.

Nonetheless, more effective use of limited investments should be possible.

OPPOSING VIEWS OF OUR STRATEGY

Many critics of this engagement strategy, however, argue that training foreign militaries is counter-democratic. Robert Pastor, a Latin American expert on the Carter Administration National Security Council, believes that the United States is wasting an historic opportunity to change its relations with Latin America by working more closely with civilian governments instead of the military. He argues that our training of Latin American armed forces in counter-drug operations may succeed in reducing the drug trade, but that it will destabilize democracy by enabling the military to focus on internal security and, thus, continue to involve themselves in politics.¹⁷ Although less tangible, the long term benefits of stable democracies may be worth more to the United States than reduce drug trade.

When the armed forces of a nation are focused primarily on internal conflict, strong civilian control of the military is difficult to sustain.¹⁸ Military orientation on internal security presents several challenges to civilian control. It enables the military to operate in areas that are normally the province of the civilian sector, primarily the police and intelligence. The armed forces then apply methods more appropriate to the battlefield than to chasing lawbreakers.

Military involvement in dealing with these problems may alter their political role. A reversal of Clausewitz's famous dictum ensues. Politics becomes an extension of war (or of military interests).¹⁹ The military assumes roles such as conducting psychological operations against its own countrymen and collecting domestic intelligence. Widespread human rights abuses result from such activities.

It also strengthens the military as a political institution relative to the historically weak Latin American civilian political institutions. In such a state of affairs, nations must be wary of assigning internal security missions to their armed forces. General Fred F. Woerner, former USSOUTHCOM commander, describes the danger in saying that, "mature democracies can use the military in this broader security environment without concern of challenge to democratic governance because of the strength of their political institutions and processes. This luxury may not be available in emergent democracies."²⁰

These types of arguments originated in the 1960s when Latin American armed forces employed the "National Security Doctrine" to justify interventions into politics. That doctrine envisioned national security as involving more than just the military aspect of national defense and gave the military the duty to intervene when politicians endangered security. It

provided theoretical justification for military governments. Prior to the 1960s militaries established military governments to reestablish the status quo ante and governed for only short periods. Beginning in the 1960s, they began to see themselves as capable of solving the underlying problems of their societies. This led to a focus on internal order and the establishment of long-term rule in order to permanently fix their nations' political, economic and social problems.

Practical application of the doctrine began in Brazil. In 1964 the "Brazilian armed forces intervened and, under the aegis of national security and development, controlled the political system for twenty-one years." This focus on the internal enemy supplied a "rationale for expanding the role of the military."²¹ Long periods of military rule in Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay were justified the same way. Many argue that these attitudes remain powerful within Latin American militaries and that our current military engagement strategy reinforces this counter-democratic tradition.²²

Again, Chile serves as an instructive example and gives a mixed message. In 1997, it published the Chilean National Defense Book.²³ This was the first open statement of national security published by the Chilean government and recognized the right of each citizen to have access to it. On the other hand,

it also repeatedly points out that the military has a mission to maintain internal as well as external order.

Congress has been concerned that United States military training has reinforced the Latin disposition to intervene in politics. It mandated that the focus of U.S. training of foreign armies must be on human rights, democratic values, civilian control over the military, and reform of military justice systems.²⁴ But critics say that the United States has violated similar intents of Congress in the past. The prime example cited is the School of Americas, the so-called "School of Assassins." Since a few of its graduates have gone on to participate in coups and human rights abuses, they argue that the school must be the cause. They cite lists of graduates who were involved in high profile cases. Among them are the murder of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, the 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America in El Salvador, and six Peruvian officers linked to the murder of students and a professor. They also cite the use of seven Spanish language manuals at the School of the Americas during the years 1982-1991 that advocated torture, execution, and blackmail.²⁵ Critics argue that even when the United States agenda included human rights and support for democracy, as it did in El Salvador in the 1980s, our Cold War agenda always trumped that agenda. At times, we were more

interested in defeating communists than supporting democracy. We looked the other way when our client militaries committed human rights abuses as long as they were fulfilling their role in the anticommunist agenda. More importantly, because client militaries knew that we perceived them to be strategically important for the United States, they felt less restrained in committing atrocious acts.

Furthermore, violations of congressional intent allegedly continue today. A 1991 law exempts U.S. special operating forces (SOF) from congressional restrictions and enables them to train foreign units that are known human rights violators. This has been particularly true in training Colombian counterdrug units. Critics argue that other nations cannot take us seriously about democratic obedience when we knowingly train human rights abusers. Especially now, they ask, "whether such loosely monitored involvement with the region's armies is appropriate when fledgling democratic governments are struggling to consolidate civilian rule."²⁶ Of course, these same critics see military encroachment on civilian rule as a greater threat than drug trafficking.

In short, critics argue that U.S. engagement with the militaries of Latin America strengthens foes of democracy. They argue further that it also institutionally strengthens the already strong military and contributes to a power imbalance

between civilians and military. This reinforces the political self-confidence of the military and undermines its respect for civilian authority.²⁷ U.S. encouragement of military, as opposed to police, involvement in the drug war achieves the same unintended effect critics argue. Those same critics want us to continue the old prohibition against training Latin American police forces.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STRATEGY

But, how is a nation to deal with an internal security threat that is beyond the capability of its police to defeat? The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas (FARC) continues to mount major conventional attacks against both the Colombian Army and police. Even with the capture of much of its leadership since 1992, the Sendero Luminoso remains an insurgent force in Peru. The alliance between insurgents and narcotraffickers in both Peru and Colombia makes the internal security challenge even more daunting. Max Manwaring argues that international terrorism and organized crime (ITOC) is conducting a war "that is more destabilizing and destructive than conventional war."²⁸ Logic demands that a nation use its military to combat such a clear threat to national security. This threat helps to blur the boundaries between military and civilian roles and calls for a greater integration of their efforts.²⁹ In short, the risk of military involvement in

internal security may be worth taking. But, if nations are aware of the risk, they can watch carefully to ensure the military does not overstep its role.

Furthermore, it is not necessarily true that doctrines of national security that focus on internal security naturally lead to military intrusion into politics. The Latin American militaries see their professional mission as to defend the nation. Much of the current generation of officers recognizes that democracy is not an abstract concept, but rather an ideal that their nations must achieve.³⁰ On the contrary, governments may be in real danger of losing legitimacy with their own people if they fail to deal with the tremendous internal security problems. Loss of legitimacy could mean loss of confidence in the ability of civilian governments to resolve the problems. This could lead to a renewed cycle of military praetorianism.³¹ My personal experience in Peru supports this view. In 1988, during a period of hyperinflation and growing strength for Sendero Luminoso, I frequently heard from Peruvian civilians the comment, that "what we need in Peru is a Pinochet."

Even among critics, there seems to be general agreement concerning the goal of our Latin American strategy. They agree that engagement with Latin America is critical for achieving more stable democracies. Disagreements arise concerning the

form of that engagement. Most argue that engagement should focus almost exclusively on civilian establishments.

Critics are partly correct, but are wrong about the strategy itself. Latin American military involvement in internal police functions may reinforce their involvement in politics. Certainly, the School of Americas has produced a number of graduates who have done just as they allege. But, it also has inculcated professional standards of democratic and humanitarian behavior among over 57,000 students through the years. Critics cite hundreds of graduates who have been involved in human rights abuses or coups. But, they rarely link abuses to anything taught at the school. On the contrary, these graduates acted independently of what was taught at the school. Supporters of the school can cite many officers who had a positive influence on the development of democracy. Indeed, even during the height of the Cold War, the school taught that "the key to combating insurgent warfare and resisting the spread of Communism always rested upon the concept of the legitimacy of the government in power based on the perception of the population."³² To train military personnel in torture or to purposely violate human rights would have run counter to this fundamental premise of the school and was never part of its doctrine.

It is hard to measure, other than anecdotally, what the School of Americas and other educational programs, may have prevented from happening, i.e., elections not overturned, human rights violations not committed, etc. We can, however, learn something from the case of the Jesuit murders in El Salvador. After the extensive U.S. training program began in El Salvador human rights abuses dramatically declined and the military never saw fit to take over the government. All of the junior officers who were involved in these murders did, indeed, attend the School of the Americas. They attended the Cadet Course, but nothing in that course taught or condoned these acts of atrocity. Further, unlike previous high profile political murders in the early 80s, an army colonel was the first to report the Jesuit murders. The military had begun to police itself -- many believe as the result of American military influence and the necessity to behave in order to receive U.S. security assistance.³³ The Salvordan Army still protected too many abusers during and after the war, but progress had been made.

The general thrust of our engagement strategy in Latin America must continue. Despite the democratic transitions of the 1980s, we cannot assume that democracy is secure. Argentina underwent a series of military revolts in the late 1980s in reaction to the civilian government's prosecution of human

rights abusers. But now democracy has deeper roots and the military is fairly obedient. There were two coup attempts in 1992 in Venezuela, traditionally one of the most democratic nations in Latin America. The leader of both attempts, Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez, was elected President of Venezuela, took office in February 1999, and has threatened to dissolve Congress if it does not accept his plan to hold a national referendum on a new constitution. He has also reinstalled officers involved in the 1992 coup. Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori seized dictatorial powers in Peru in 1992 with the aid of the military and continues to use them today to intimidate Congress.

Latin America has experienced democratic tides before only to see them recede. These recent examples may not indicate that the current tide is about to recede, but they indicate that the democratic future of Latin America cannot be taken for granted. Retired Peruvian General Edgardo Mercado Jarrin continues to describe much of Latin America as being in a state of latent insurgency. He also states that, even with elected governments, most countries in Latin America have serious instability problems related to extreme poverty and the prevalence of violence and corruption.³⁴ Both Peru and Colombia are well beyond the stage of latent insurgency and suffer the combined effects of powerful insurgencies and drug traffickers, which

renders parts of their countryside ungovernable. Colombia has an enormous security problem: the police and military have no presence in almost 50% of the national territory.

In short, we cannot assume that the era of military governments has ended. The most important restraint upon the militaries in Argentina, Peru, and Uruguay may be self-imposed. Unlike the Chilean military, the armed forces of these nations view their recent attempts to govern as failures and have no real appetite to do so again. In 1986, Argentinean General Hector Rios Ereñu stated, "There can be no expression of a desire to return to political power when experience tells us that the result is totally negative for our country and fundamentally so for our armed forces."³⁵ When the generation that had a hand in this rule passes and institutional memories fade, this self-restraint may also fade. That, combined with potential conditions of economic and political instability, which may lead to a nation's loss of faith in its civilian political institutions, could very well lead to a renewed cycle of military praetorianism. The people may demand it because of insecurity and the inability of governments to sustain their legitimacy.

The military withdrawal from governing in the 1980s was also more complex than a simple transfer of the reins of government. All of the militaries sought and gained mechanisms

that allow them to continue to influence national policy. One can see this clearly in the amnesty granted to human rights violators. The "truce" that resulted may be tenuous until generational memories fade, this time on the part of civilians. The still unresolved case of the arrest of former Chilean leader (and lifetime Senator) General Augusto Pinochet in London reminds us of the dangers that still lurk here. It may resurrect latent animosity and lead the military to act to defend itself. United States military engagement can serve to raise the threshold point at which Latin American militaries intervene and, in that way, prevent their involvement in politics.

Our interest in Latin America is the achievement of a stable political process to prevent the need for an increase to our current level of political-military commitment to the region. It is in the national interest of the United States that democratic political reforms continue in Latin America. To help achieve this, we can and should assist the region's nations strengthen their civilian establishment's ability to understand and control the military. We can also aid in encouraging its militaries to continue their current disengagement from politics.

Support for democratization strengthens stability. U.S. military efforts must continually be monitored by our own

civilian defense establishment to ensure that we meet that intent. Programs that may be used quite effectively to attain short-term tactical goals must always be kept in focus to ensure that they do not undermine our strategic goals. Our educational programs must continue to emphasize the democratic nature of civil-military relations and respect for human rights. We must focus our counterdrug efforts on the civilian police and encourage a military focus on external missions. These efforts tend to reinforce, rather than discourage military involvement in internal politics. We need to understand all the implications of training Latin American militaries in domestic law enforcement operations. We, as a nation, have always been very reluctant to allow our military to do so. We have traditionally turned to the military to restore domestic order only as a last resort and for very limited operations. Yet, we seem to push the emerging democracies of Latin America to do it without any consideration of its implications for the future of their insecure democracies. With the danger of the threats to internal order mentioned above, the militaries of many nations in the region clearly have an important job to do: security. But, the United States must understand that those same nations must define for themselves how they are going to balance the roles of their police and armed forces in public security.

The most critical factor for the continuation of the democratic trend is that civilians and the military recognize the roles that each must play. The military must recognize that its subordination to civilian control is an absolute prerequisite for the survival of democracy. Civilians must recognize that the security requirements of an emerging democracy demand a role for the military and that each must work together to define those requirements.³⁶ As only one example, what is the military role in the counterdrug fight? Can it be separated from the counterinsurgency fight? Can the military's role be limited and still obtain the security a nation needs? By working together to resolve these strategic challenges, civilians and the military can gain a mutual recognition of and respect for their roles in a democracy.

CONCLUSION

The United States facilitates this effort. We must continue to reach out to civilians in their defense establishments in order to help create a core of defense experts who understand defense requirements and use that knowledge to bring the military institutions under control. More clearly, the civilian sector in Latin America must gain deep professional knowledge of military strategy and operations and then use that knowledge to develop control over a period of time that may be as much as a generation. They have historically lacked the

knowledge, the desire, and the power to assert control. Current American efforts to impart this knowledge should be expanded.

E-IMET and IMET must be better focused. We should consider reducing the amount of technical training under IMET and focus it more on Professional Military Education (PME). It is within PME courses that Latin American officers gain an appreciation and understanding of the proper role of the military in a democratic society. These courses expose officers to democratic values and the positive interaction that American officers have with civilian authorities. We must also focus E-IMET to reach more civilians. John Cope recommends adopting a "train the trainer" approach for E-IMET around the world that can be applied to Latin America. This could include collaboration between the CDHS and faculties of military and civilian institutions. The program "might also provide assistance to national academic institutions in the development of international relations, national security studies, and public administration curricula. Such cooperation would help expand the potential pool of civilians interested in national security and defense issues and improve the caliber of government and legislative staffs focused on security and defense issues."³⁷ It might also expand the number in the non-governmental sector who could offer criticism from the outside.

The need to make permanent the democratic transitions of the 1980s caused the civilian sector to recognize the need to assert control. Military reluctance to govern again and their renewed (although still reluctant) respect for democracy indicate that now is the time for civilians to move forward. This will take time and consistent effort for at least a generation. But, focusing our efforts puts our limited funds at the decisive point of civil-military relations in Latin America—the lack of understanding by both military and civilians of the military's role in a democracy and the consequent lack of trust between the two. Returning to the model we used earlier, it will help nations get beyond the first level of mere formal control and lead to the second and third levels of respect and integration.

There are contrary indicators concerning the state of civil-military relations in Latin America. Many nations have civilian defense ministers, but the extent of their control of the military remains in question. Nations are attempting to expand the number of qualified civilians in their defense ministries, but at an extremely slow pace. Brazil and Chile have published open statements of defense policy for their citizens to examine, but continue a focus on internal security. But, most importantly, belief in the need for civilian control of the military appears to be growing. The United States must

help to reinforce this trend. Positive democratic changes have occurred in Latin America in the last twenty years. The challenge now is sustainment.

Word Count: 5,993

ENDNOTES

¹ Department of Defense, Annual Report to the President and the Congress (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 1998), 13 (hereafter referred to as DOD Report).

² Emory Upton, The Military Policy of the United States, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968).

³ Remarks by Russell F. Weigley in "A Growing Civil-Military Gap? Wrap-Up Panel Discussion of the Olin Institute's U.S. Military and Post-Cold War American Society Project," 26 October 1997; available from <http://data.fas.harvard.edu/cfia/olin/pubs/no14.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 February 1999.

⁴ Gabriel Marcella suggested these levels to me.

⁵ Gabriel Marcella, ed., Warriors in Peacetime: The Military and Democracy in Latin America (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1994), 154.

⁶ U.S. Southern Command, Theater Strategy, (Quarry Heights, Panama, 1 July 1992), 2.

⁷ National Defense University, Strategic Assessment 1998, (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1998), 35.

⁸ Ibid., 116.

⁹ DOD Report, 13.

¹⁰ All of the IMET data above was taken from: Adam Isaacson and Jay Olson, Just the Facts: A civilian's guide to U.S. defense and security assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean (Washington, D.C.: Latin America Working Group, 1998), 25-32.

¹¹ Sereseres remarks were summarized in Gabriel Marcella, ed., Warriors in Peacetime: The Military and Democracy in Latin America (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1994), 146.

¹² Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, "Home Page," Undated; available from <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/chds/chdshp.html>; Internet; accessed 23 December 1998.

¹³ Luis Bitencourt Emilio, "Civil-Military Relations in the Americas for the 21st Century: A Latin American Perspective," in The Role of the Armed Forces in the Americas: Civil-Military Relations for the 21st Century, ed. Donald E. Schulz (Carlisle, PA: United States Army Strategic Studies Institute, 1998), 93.

¹⁴ Richard Downes, "Building New Security Relationships in the Americas: The Next Critical Steps," in The Role of the Armed Forces in the Americas: Civil-Military Relations for the 21st Century, ed. Donald E. Schulz (Carlisle, PA: United States Army Strategic Studies Institute, 1998), 23.

¹⁵ Andrés Polloni, "The Education of Civilians in the national Defense Arena in Chile," (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College Strategy Research Project, 1998), 12.

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¹⁸ Wendy Hunter, State and Soldier in Latin America: Reddening the Military's Role in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, United States Institute of Peace Peaceworks Series (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace), vii.

¹⁹ Paul W. Zagorski, Democracy vs. National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 126.

²⁰ Fred F. Woerner, Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: Pitfalls and Prospects in The Role of the Armed Forces in the Americas: Civil-Military Relations for the 21st Century, ed. Donald E. Schulz (Carlisle, PA: United States Army Strategic Studies Institute, 1998), 74.

²¹ Zagorski, 9.

²² Luigi R. Einaudi, "The Politics of Security in the Western Hemisphere," Parameters, Winter 1996-97, 5 and Paul G. Buchanan, "U.S. Defense Policy for the Western Hemisphere: New Wine in Old Bottles, or Something Completely Different?" Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, Spring 1996, 10.

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²⁴ William H. McCoy, Jr., and Jennifer Taw, International Military Student Training: Beyond Tactics, A Rand Note. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 1993), vi.

²⁵ See James Kitfield, "School For Scandal," National Journal, 5 October 1996, 2144 and Thomas P. Rausch, Closing the Door On the School of the Assassins, "America, January 4, 1997, 5-7.

²⁶ Dana Priest, "A Tutor to Every Army in Latin America." Washington Post, 13 July 1998, sec. A, p. 16.

²⁷ J. Samuel Fitch, "Democracy, Human Rights, and the Armed Forces in Latin America," in The United States and Latin America in the 1990s: Beyond the Cold War, ed. Jonathan Hartlyn, Lars Schoultz, and Augusto Varas (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 188.

²⁸ Max G. Manwaring, "Security of the Western Hemisphere: International Terrorism and Organized Crime," Strategic Forum, April 1998, 4.

²⁹ Marcella, 5.

³⁰ Gabriel Marcella, "The Latin American Military, Low-Intensity Conflict, and Democracy," in Rank and Privilege: The Military and Society in Latin America, ed. Linda Alexander Rodriguez (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), 194.

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³⁴ See Manwaring, "Guerrillas, Narcotics, and Terrorism: Old Menaces in a New World."

³⁵ As quoted in Marcella, Warriors in Peacetime: The Military and Democracy in Latin America.

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³⁷ John A. Cope, International Military Education and Training: An Assessment, (Washington: Institute For National Strategic Studies, 1995), 61-62.

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